REMARKS

Claims 25-27 are added herein. Claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-27 now remain pending in the present application.

The Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider earlier rejections in light of the following remarks. No new issues are raised nor is further search required as a result of the changes made herein. Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-24 over Igari and AAPA

Claims 1, 8, 16, 17, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese document No. JP404026226A ("Igari"); and claims 4-6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 18-20, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Igari in view of applicant's admitted prior art ("AAPA"). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-24 recite a method and apparatus utilizing a second current path connecting a row conductor and a column conductor, the second current path comprising a diode to allow current to flow only in one direction therethrough.

The Examiner correctly acknowledges Igari discloses three diodes in each column (Office Action, page 5). However, all of Igari's current paths connecting rows and columns use **switches** that allow current to flow in both directions, even if a diode within a column restricts current to flow in only one direction (Igari, Fig. 2). Thus, Igari's column diode restricts current flow in a current path connecting a row conductor and column conductor, NOT a component **within** the current path. Igari fails to disclose a method and apparatus utilizing a second current path connecting a row conductor and a column conductor, the second current path comprising a diode to allow current to flow only in one direction therethrough, as recited by claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-24.

AAPA is relied on by the Examiner to disclose momentary switching elements and persistent switching elements (Office Action, page 4). However, AAPA fails to disclose or suggest a method and apparatus utilizing a second

current path connecting a row conductor and a column conductor, the second current path comprising a diode to allow current to flow only in one direction therethrough, as recited by claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-24.

Thus, even if it were obvious to modify Igari with AAPA (which it is not), the theoretical result still fails to disclose or suggest a method and apparatus utilizing a second current path connecting a row conductor and a column conductor, the second current path comprising a diode to allow current to flow only in one direction therethrough, as recited by claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-24.

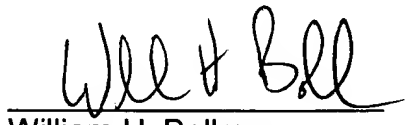
Applicant's claimed features have advantages over the cited prior art. Igari discloses use of two conductive paths between a row and a column. However, Igari relies on a diode within a column conductor. Thus, Igari not only restricts the flow of current through a current path connecting a row and a column, Igari additionally restricts the flow of current within the column. Depending on the configuration of power through the network of rows and columns, Igari's restricting the flow of current within a column conductor limits the options related to routing current throughout the circuit. Igari fails to disclose a system and method having a benefit of, e.g., allowing current to flow in either direction in a column conductor giving flexibility in configuring power to a switch matrix.

For at least all the above reasons, claims 1, 4-6, 8-10 and 14-24 are patentable over the prior art of record. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been mooted by the cancellation of prior claims, it is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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